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REVIEW OF DATA AVAILABLE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION STATISTICS IN AFRICA

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. It is generally acknowledged today that international migration creates demographic, economic and social problems both for the host country and for the country of origin and that information is needed to evaluate the nature and scope of such movements in order to understand its causes and to formulate programmes for coping with the problems.

2. All countries (developed countries in particular) are making an effort to secure information on the number and particulars of migrants who enter or leave their territory because such information can be used to attain national objectives. In Africa wide-ranging surveys on international migration have been carried out by the World Bank in the countries of West Africa in order to acquire a better appreciation of the causes and dynamics of such migration.

3. Nevertheless, even though the importance of international migration data is recognized, the data collection methods are little developed and the information secured is neither reliable nor regular. In order to redress the situation, the United Nations Organization has published a set of recommendations on international migration statistics. The publication defines the various categories of international migrants, the immigrant stock, the type of statistical data that countries should collect, tabulate and publish. The aim of the publication is to assist those countries, especially the least statistically developed, to build up statistics on international migration for national use. The body of information thus secured should be as comparable as possible internationally.

4. This paper examines the availability of data on international migration statistics in Africa. It comes in two parts. Part One deals with definitions and the sources of information tapped by African countries in collecting and compiling international migration statistics. Part Two reviews the information that African countries possess on migrant flow and on immigrant stock. In each part, the problems to be resolved in implementing the United Nations recommendations will be briefly described.

5. It should be mentioned that this document has been prepared on the basis of two technical publications: the first is document E/ECA/STAT/WG/MS/89/7 which reviews data available on internal migration in Africa, in annexes I, II and III and the second document ST/ESA/STAT/80/Rev.1 describes national practices in the field of international migration statistics: definitions and methods of collecting data and compiling statistics.

II. DEFINITIONS AND SOURCES OF DATA ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN AFRICAN COUNTRIES

1. Definitions

6. International migration is generally defined as a change of residence involving the crossing of an international border. In order to remove the differences which the definition and use of the term "residence" may evoke in various countries, the criteria employed in the United Nations recommendations are the duration of stay or absence from the country as well as the purpose of travel. Accordingly eight categories of people travelling between countries have been classified as migrants. They are: (i) for arrivals: long-term immigrants, short-term immigrants, short-term emigrants returning to the country and nomads, to some extent; (ii) for departures: long-term emigrants, short-term emigrants, short-term immigrants leaving the country and nomads.

7. People who indicate a duration of stay or absence exceeding one year are termed long-term or permanent migrants while those who indicate a duration of stay or absence not exceeding one year are classified as short-term migrants provided that their travel was undertaken with a view to securing employment in the country. Annexes I and II give the recommended definitions of international migrants.

8. A review of the second document mentioned above on the study that the United Nations Statistical Office conducted on international migrations showed the multiplicity of national definitions currently being used in African countries. Tables 1 and 2 summarize information on the concepts, classifications and definitions of immigrants and emigrants as used by the African countries.

9. It can be seen from Table 1 that various criteria have been used to identify immigrants and that those definitions are far from the United Nations recommendations. Nevertheless, the criteria of actual or intent to secure paid employment, have been taken into account in the national definitions given by the African countries. Ethiopia, Malawi, Nigeria and Uganda have set a minimum period of six months for the actual or intended duration of stay in the country while Mauritius, the Seychelles and Zambia have adopted a minimum period of 11 months. Cameroon has used a really short minimum period since it defines an immigrant as a person entering the country with a visa and staying for at least one month. Ghana, the Gambia and the United Republic of Tanzania specify no minimum duration of stay while Angola and Gabon have expressly excluded the condition of a minimum duration of stay in their definition of an immigrant as a person who enters the country irrespective of the duration of stay.

Table 1: Concepts used by African countries in collecting and compiling statistics on immigrants

Concepts: A: Duration of stay
B: Intention to reside
C: Intention to secure employment
D: Other criteria
E: Arrivals without specification

Country	National definitions provided	Concepts
Algeria	Foreigners residing in the country	D
Angola	Persons registered as passengers arriving by maritime transport-irrespective of purpose and duration of stay	E
Ethiopia	Persons entering the country with a valid entry visa that allows them to become residents	B
Gabon	Persons entering the country-irrespective of the duration of stay	E
Gambia	Persons arriving in the country by maritime or air transport	E
Ghana	Persons arriving in the country	E
Côte d'Ivoire	Non-residents entering the country to work or to stay	A D E
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Persons entering the country at a border control post	C E
Madagascar	Persons arriving in the country Persons leaving the country	E E
Malawi	Immigrants leaving the country for good Authorities leaving the country	E
Nigeria	Persons leaving the country	E
Rwanda	Persons registered at the border as leaving the country-irrespective of the length of absence	E
Seychelles	Residents leaving the country with the intention of staying away for more than 12 months or for good	A D
Somalia	Persons who have submitted exit declarations	E

Country	National definitions provided	Concepts
Swaziland	Temporary absentees going only to work in South Africa	C
Uganda	Residents leaving the country for more than one year	A B,D
Cameroon	Persons leaving the country with an exit visa	E
The United Rep. of Tanzania	Persons leaving the country	E
Zaire	Persons leaving the country temporarily with an exit visa	E
Zimbabwe	Asiatic and European residents leaving the country permanently or for more than 12 months	A,D

Source: United Nations ST/ESA/STAT/80/Rev.1.

Table 2: Concepts used by African countries in collecting and compiling statistics on emigrants

Concepts: A: Duration of absence
B: Intention to stay or to reside in Africa
C: Intention to secure employment
D: Residence status or length of stay in country before departure
E: Others

Country	National definitions provided	Concepts
Algeria	Residents living abroad	D
Angola	Persons registered as passengers leaving the country by maritime transport-irrespective of the purpose or duration of stay outside	E
Egypt	Persons leaving the country	E
Ethiopia	Persons leaving the country with no intention of returning immediately	E
Gabon	Persons leaving the country	E
Gambia	Persons leaving the country by air or maritime transport	E
Ghana	Persons leaving the country	D E
Kenya	Persons leaving the country	E
Libyan Arab Jamahiriya	Persons leaving the country	B E
Madagascar	Persons leaving the country	E
Malawi	Immigrants leaving the country permanently. Authorities leaving the country	E
Nigeria	Persons leaving the country	E
Rwanda	Persons registered at the border as leaving the country-irrespective of the duration of absence	E
Seychelles	Residents leaving the country with intention to stay away for more than 12 months or permanently	A D
Somalia	Persons who have submitted exit declaration	E

Country	National definitions provided	Concepts
Swaziland	Temporary absentees only going to work in South Africa	C
Uganda	Residents leaving the country for more than one year	A B D
Cameroon	Persons leaving the country with an exit visa	E
Tanzania	Persons leaving the country	E
Zaire	Persons leaving the country temporarily with an exit visa	E
Zimbabwe	Asian and European residents leaving the country permanently or for more than 12 months	A D

Source: United Nations - ST/ECA/STAT/89/Rev.1.

10. Only a few countries used the criterion of "stay in the country for the purpose of securing paid employment over a period of time". Ethiopia, Côte d'Ivoire and the United Republic of Tanzania mention no such period while Uganda and Mauritius indicate periods of six months and 12 months respectively.

11. With regard to immigrants table 2 also shows the various concepts and definitions used in identifying such people. Only Malawi, Nigeria, the Seychelles and Uganda mention minimum periods of absence from the country. Furthermore, most of the definitions given by the countries fail to mention the purpose of departure.

12. Currently then, there exists a multiplicity of national definitions none of which differentiates the categories of arrivals and departures in line with the recommended definitions. The general practice has been to define a migrant according to arrivals and/or departures for which statistics are collected. With regard to immigrant stock (defined in the recommendations as people born abroad and staying in the country for more than one year) no African country provided a definition and so the implementation of this recommendation poses no problem.

2. Sources of information

13. Just as with internal migration statistics, the two sources on statistical data on international migration are administrative registers and field surveys, that is to say censuses and sample surveys.

14. Among the administrative registers, one source is the embarkation or disembarkation cards which all international travellers have to fill out upon entry or exit at border control posts. The information gathered in this way includes the date of entry or exit, the name, sex, nationality, date and place of birth, country of residence and at times the purpose of travel, duration of stay or intended duration of absence.

15. It should be mentioned that in Africa, this method of data collection leaves gaps where visitors travelling overland are concerned. Because of the length of international borders there might be little surveillance and the illiteracy of most passengers can prevent them from filling our their forms correctly. On the other hand, this method provides a good source of information on migrant movements where air and maritime transport passengers are concerned.

16. Other administrative registers such as population registers, labour and employment registers can also be used as sources of information on migrants but they are not consulted by most countries in order to secure data.

17. Field surveys also provide detailed information on international migration, in particular data on the characteristics of immigrants and immigrant stock. International migrants can be identified simply by making judicious use of the direct questions

normally asked (during censuses and opinion surveys) regarding nationality, place of birth, place of last residence, place of residence on a given date prior to the census or survey, the duration of stay in the place of current residence or date of settlement in the place of enumeration and the place of permanent residence.

18. It should be mentioned that document E/ECA/STAT/WG/MS/89/7 on data available on internal migration statistics in Africa indicates that 88 per cent of the African countries (within the sample considered) collected information on place of birth, 35 per cent on the place of last residence, 62 per cent on the place of residence on a given prior date and 54 per cent on the length of stay at the place of current residence. Thus, the information needed to identify and calculate the overall numbers and geographical, demographic, social and economic characteristics both of migrant flow and of immigrant stock, as advocated in the United Nations recommendations, can be collected from field surveys.

III. REVIEW OF DATA AVAILABLE ON INTERNATIONAL MIGRATION IN AFRICA

19. The United Nations recommendations also indicate the types of information to be collected on international migrants and immigrant stock. They are divided into two main categories: (i) those which help to identify types of migrants and to calculate overall numbers of migrant persons; and (ii) those on the basis of which socio-economic and other characteristics of migrants and immigrant stock can be determined. The second category of information is important and necessary for evaluating the consequences of migration and the characteristics to be investigated regarding various categories of migrants can be found in annexes III and IV.

20. In the previous chapters, it was stated that the current definitions of international migrants, as used in African countries, draw no distinction between various categories of migrants as advocated in the recommendations and that the two major sources of information were border control facilities and field surveys. Table 3 sums up the data collected by African countries on migrant and immigrant stock characteristics according to source of information and the extent to which they correspond to the recommended characteristics.

21. An analysis of table 3 shows the manifest lack of data on migrant flows. This is because field surveys are the only adequate source of information used in the African countries. Only such information as would allow the net number of international immigrants over a given period of time to be calculated may be gathered. It is enough to determine the place of residence from surveys at one or several prior dates as well as the duration of stay at the place of current residence and country of permanent residence. Such information on mobility is normally built into many of the questions asked in census and survey questionnaires.

Table 1. Core collection of African countries and census or survey-based
with United Nations recommendations

Topic Number	Recommended topic	Emigrants	Returnees	Immigrants (stock)					
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
I	Information required for the identification and determination of total numbers								
	1. Date of arrival	X							
	2. Year or period of arrival	X	X	X					X
	3. Date of departure				X				
	4. Intended duration of stay	X			X				
	5. Intended duration of absence					X	X	X	
	6. Actual duration of stay								
	7. Actual duration of absence								
	8. a) Presence in country continuously for more than one year at any time								
	b) If present continuously for more than one year at any time, presence continuously for more than one year since previous entry or more than one year								
	9. a) Absence from country continuously for more than one year at any time								
	b) If absent continuously for more than one year at any time, presence continuously for more than one year since previous absence of more than one year								
	10. Purpose of current arrival	X		X					
	11. Purpose of current departure				X		X		
	12. Purpose of last arrival								
	13. Purpose of last departure								
II	Geographic, demographic, social, economic and educational characteristics								
	14. Country of last stay of more than one year								
	15. Country of intended stay								
	16. Country in which current last service	X							
	17. Country of birth and or country of citizenship	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	18. Sex	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	19. Age	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	20. Marital status	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
	21. Educational attainment and or educational qualifications	X	X		X	X		X	X

Items	Reference year	Countries			Censuses			Countries	
Number									

Note: B: Border collection
C: Census
S: Sample survey

23. Censuses and surveys conducted in Africa have provided abundant information on the characteristics of immigrant stock. Most of the tables proposed in the recommendations can be easily produced by African countries.

IV. CONCLUSION

24. This paper has discussed the definitions and information sources used by African countries as well as the availability of statistical data on international migration. They can all be seen to be far from conforming to United Nations recommendations.

25. In view of the importance of statistics on international migration for demographic analysis and planning, African countries should prepare a national programme for the development of statistics. In the immediate term they should compile an inventory and publish the definitions, classifications and methods they use for collecting statistical data on immigrants and emigrants as well as available national statistics in order to clarify the similarities and differences existing between national information and that advocated in the United Nations recommendations.

ANNEX I

COMPONENTS OF DEFINITIONS OF ARRIVING MIGRANTS

Components of definitions	Category
A. Never in country of arrival continuously for more than one year	
1. Intended duration of stay in country of arrival more than one year	Long term immigrant
2. Intended duration of stay in country of arrival one year or less:	
(a) Entering to work at an occupation remunerated from within the country (but not as a border worker) or to accompany or join such a person as a dependant or domestic employee ...	Short-term immigrant
(b) Entering for any other purpose	Other
B. At least once in country of arrival continuously for more than one year:	
1. Away from country of arrival continuously for more than one year since the most recent continuous stay of more than one year:	
(a) Intended duration of stay in country of arrival more than one year	Long-term immigrant
(b) Intended duration of stay in country of arrival one year or less:	
(i) Entering to work at an occupation remunerated from within the country (but not as a border worker) or to accompany or join such a person as a dependant or domestic employee	Short-term immigrant
(ii) Entering for any other purpose .	Other

Components of definitions	Category
2. Not away from country of arrival continuously for more than one year since most recent continuous stay of more than one year:	
(a) Last departure from country of arrival was to work abroad at an occupation remunerated from a foreign country (but not as a border worker) or to accompany or join such a person as a dependant or domestic employee ...	Short-term emigrant returning
(b) Last departure from country of arrival was for any other purpose ..	Other

Source: Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration. United Nations Publication Series M. No. 58.

ANNEX II

COMPONENTS OF DEFINITIONS OF DEPARTING MIGRANTS

Components of definitions	Category
A. Never away from country of departure continuously for more than one year:	
1. Intended duration of absence from country of departure more than one year	Long-term emigrant
2. Intended duration of absence from country of departure one year or less:	
(a) Departing to work at an occupation remunerated from outside the country (but not as a border worker) or to accompany or join such a person as a dependant or domestic employee	Short-term emigrant
(b) Departing for any other purposes ..	Other
B. At least once away from country of departure continuously for more than one year:	
1. In country of departure continuously for more than one year since the most recent continuous absence of more than one year:	
(a) Intended duration of absence from country of departure more than one year	Long-term emigrant
(b) Intended duration of absence from country of departure one year or less:	
(i) Departing to work at an occupation remunerated from outside the country (but not as a border worker) or to accompany or join such a person as a dependant or domestic employee	Short-term immigrant
(ii) Departing for any other purpose	Other
2. Not in country of departure continuously for more than one year since the most recent absence of more than one year:	

Components of definitions	Category
2. Not in country of departure continuously for more than one year since the most recent absence of more than one year:	
(a) Last arrival into country of departure was to work at an occupation remunerated from within the country (but not as a border worker) or to accompany or join such a person as a dependant or domestic employee	Short-term immigrant departing
(b) Last arrival into country of departure was for any other purpose	Other

Source: Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, United Nations Publication Series M, No. 58.

ANNEX III

Characteristics of immigrants

(a) Long-term immigrants

(i) Age
(ii) Sex
(iii) Marital status
(iv) Country of last stay of more than one year
(v) Country of birth and/or country of citizenship
(vi) Educational attainment and/or educational qualifications
(vii) Country in which higher education was received
(viii) Economic activity status in country of last stay of more than one year
(ix) Occupation in country of last stay of more than one year
(x) Actual or expected occupation in country of arrival

(b) Short-term immigrants

(i) Age
(ii) Sex
(iii) Marital status
(iv) Country of last stay of more than one year
(v) Occupation in country of last stay of more than one year
(vi) Actual or expected occupation in country of arrival

(c) Short-term emigrants returning

(i) Age
(ii) Sex
(iii) Marital status
(iv) Country in which subject last worked
(v) Intended economic activity in country of arrival
(vi) Economic activity status in country or last stay of one year of less
(vii) Actual or expected occupation in country of arrival
(viii) Occupation in country where subject last worked

(d) For nomads

(i) Age
(ii) Sex

ANNEX IV

Characteristics of emigrants

(a) Long-term immigrants

(i) Age
(ii) Sex
(iii) Marital status
(iv) Country of intended stay
(v) Country of birth and/or country of periodic citizenship
(vi) Educational attainment and/or educational qualifications
(vii) Country in which higher education was received
(viii) Economic activity status in country of last stay of more than one year
(ix) Occupation in country of last stay of more than one year

(b) Short-term immigrants

(i) Age
(ii) Sex
(iii) Marital status
(iv) Country of intended stay
(v) Economic activity status in country of last stay of more than one year
(vi) Occupation in country of last stay of more than one year
(vii) Expected occupation in country of intended stay

(c) Short-term emigrants returning

(i) Age
(ii) Sex
(iii) Marital status
(iv) Occupation in country where subject last worked

(d) For nomads

(i) Age
(ii) Sex